

April 7, 2009
Milton, Florida

The Marine Advisory Committee met on the above date with the following members present: Chairman Jeff Marker and members Rick Harris and Dan Wakley. Also present were the County Administrator (Hunter Walker), County Engineer (Roger Blaylock), Marine Extension Agent (Christine Verlinde), and Public Works Director (Avis Whitfield). Chairman Marker called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

The minutes of the March 3, 2009 meeting were corrected and approved. The word "Escambia" was inserted into the 2nd paragraph of the March minutes.

CHAIRMAN / MEMBER ISSUES / REPORTS

Jeff Marker gave the gavel to the Vice Chair, Rick Harris, so that he could make a motion after giving his report. (See attached written report)

A motion was made by Jeff Marker and seconded by Dan Wakley to request the Board of County Commissioners enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Escambia County for deployment of reefing materials. The motion carried without objection.

Marker also made a motion to request the Board of County Commissioners authorize expenditures not to exceed \$10,000 to match cost of deployment of the reef material with Escambia County. Discussion followed about the possibility of using Boating Improvement Funds but it was determined after a review of the Statute not to be feasible. The motion was approved without objection.

The gavel was returned to the Chairman, Jeff Marker.

Mark Griffith of Navarre reported on the progress of the Marine Sanctuary Committee. He stated that the web site is operating and they are taking donations. He noted that the Board of County Commissioners has not adopted a Resolution clearly supporting the Sanctuary. Hunter Walker said the Board has supported the concept of the Marine Sanctuary but no commitment has been made to fund it. Marker noted that once the Committee gets the money for the permit it can be presented to the Board for their cooperation. Griffith said they do not want to collect money from people through the Navarre Area charitable account unless they know the County is going to hold the permits but the Committee thinks they may be able to resolve the issue by presenting a structured Resolution for the Board to consider in May and by presenting an Economic Impact Grant application to the TDC on April 15, 2009 which they hope, if approved, will cover the initial cost of the permits.

Mr. Walker stated that this will at least put the Board on notice that there is renewed interest in this project and agrees the second meeting in May is a good time to make the request.

No action was taken by the Marine Advisory Committee but it was noted that they would need to review the Resolution at the May MAC meeting.

Jeff Marker said that he noticed that the Quintette boat ramp was under water and asked if the Marine Advisory Committee needed to authorize any expenditure for the repair. Avis Whitfield said not at this time but he will make any repairs that are deemed necessary on an emergency basis and ask for assistance if needed. Mr. Whitfield mentioned that it is expected that the County will receive reimbursement from FEMA if there is significant damage to the Quintette ramp.

Mr. Marker noted that "No Wake Zones" have been established on Marquee Basin but do not extend all the way to the opening of the Blackwater River which is a safety issue for many who use that access. He suggested extending the "No Wake Zone" possibly another 50 feet or to the point of access to Blackwater River. Mr. Marker also noted that we can use BIF for this purpose. Dan Wakley made a motion that the Marine Advisory Committee recommend extending the "No Wake Zone" from the Marquee Bayou Channel all the way to the Blackwater River entrance and use the BIF for all cost. The motion was seconded by Rick Harris and passed without objection.

STAFF UPDATES

Mr. Walker stated the current balance in the Boat Registration fee reserve is \$441,134 and it is about \$7,000 or \$8,000 more than it was last month which is consistent with appreciation for that fund. He also noted that he forwarded grant information to both the City of Milton and the City of Gulf Breeze about the Boater Improvement Grant deadline and noted that the County will not be making a submission. Chris Verlinde mentioned that Johnny Norton from the City of Milton contacted her about a submission for the City of Milton for a dock at Carpenter's Park. Mr. Walker said that Gulf Breeze may have also applied but there is no reason for them to apply through the County.

Mr. Walker requested that Mr. Blaylock update the Committee on the Archie Glover Boat Ramp. Mr. Blaylock noted that DOT will allow us to use the DOT property as a spoil site subject to a commitment by our Public Works Department to dispose and restore the site. The permit application went to request for a checks and permitting has been made and permits should go to DEP this week. They have 30 days to comment on the completeness but we anticipate a quick turn around from DEP and hopefully it will be out to bid within 60 to 90 days. We anticipate the scope of the work to be a 60 day contract although we will have to wait until the bids come back to make that determination. Funding is through a grant and District 1 Recreation Funds with local match funds from Road and Bridge and Engineering for the County's portion of the match.

Dan Wakley asked about concrete slabs at the Bal Alex boat ramp. Discussion was held about the need for the concrete slabs. No action was taken.

Jeff Marker mentioned that he had received complaints about Woodlawn. Mr. Whitfield noted that it is a shallow ramp especially when the tides are low. No action was taken.

Chris Verlinde noted that a submission has been made to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for a \$30,000 grant for artificial reef deployment and that she should know in June if the grant will be awarded. In addition, there is a NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) grant for marine shell and costal habitat restoration projects and the Bay

Area Resource Council did submit a grant to do some restoration at Garcon Point and Hernandez Point on the west side for work on county property and private property, to put in some oyster shells and plants. The White Point and Garcon Point projects that DEP has been working on will probably start in May and that is when we will have the shell at the Garcon Point boat ramp. NOAA did receive a lot of Economic Stimulus money and they put out a request for projects. Two were submitted for our area. One was from the Northwest Florida Aquatic Preserves office for expansion of the Dickerson City oyster reef, which is similar to the Dead Man's Island project. DEP submitted one for dune restoration on the National Sea Shore sites of Johnson's Beach, Ft. Pickens and Santa Rosa Island which will impact us because that is our first line of defense. Part of the Economic Stimulus money is to create jobs and the DEP project did create about 26 jobs. She also noted that every 3 to 5 years the FWC Artificial Reef section and Florida Sea Grant get together and have a conference but with budget cuts they may not be able to have a statewide conference this year but will have a regional conference, probably in the fall, at the Gulf Coast Community College. Chris also thanked the Pensacola Recreational Fishing folks in the audience who have helped and supported her with her programs.

OTHER BUSINESS

No new business.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting is scheduled for May 5, 2009 at 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.